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A Top Man for a Tough Job

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There are few in the nation who are fully aware of the tasks and challenges confronting the man who serves as director of the Central Intelligence Agency. This much, however, is evident about the job: it is one of enormous responsibility and importance. It

Organizer Required

requires the talents of an accomplished administrator and organizer, one able to master complex details, reach sure judgments and issue decisive orders, often in a short time and under great pressures.

These are imposing qualifications, and the country has been fortunate that men able to meet them have been available when they were needed. One of these men is Allen Dulles, who will retire in a few weeks from the job he has held for eight years. Another is John A. McCone, who has been named by President Kennedy to succeed Mr. Dulles as director of the CIA.

Mr. McCone's qualifications for the position he is about to assume are evident. As an administrator in both private life and public service he has a deserved reputation for getting things done — quickly, efficiently, effectively. He understands the function of the policymaker and the workings of government. These are assets that will serve him well in the bureaucratic maze of official Washington.

The sensitivity of the CIA director's post requires that it be kept as much as possible away from domestic political controversy. The wide bipartisan support already voiced for Mr. McCone indicates that he will have something of a congressional mandate in his new

job. Mr. McCone is a Republican, but he has served under both Presidents Truman and Eisenhower, first as undersecretary of the Air Force, later as chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission. In both jobs he won praise and respect.

Allen Dulles' retirement comes six months after the abortive Cuban invasion, a military and political tragedy which resulted in much criticism being directed against the CIA. It is apparent that the full story of what went wrong at the Bay of Pigs cannot be told, but it is equally apparent that errors in planning and execution were made by a number of agencies and individuals, not just by the CIA. Mr. Dulles should end his long career in government under no cloud of unwarranted accusation.

Indeed, Mr. Dulles is deserving of much praise. The CIA's work — both its failures and triumphs — must of necessity remain secret. But in one unavoidably well-publicized case—that

Security Safeguard

of the U-2 flights over Russia — the success of the CIA is apparent. For four years Mr. Dulles masterminded one of the most significant intelligence operations ever recorded. Any criticism of Mr. Dulles must be weighed against the value of undertakings such as this.

There has been speculation that the role of the CIA may soon be altered. Whatever its future function, however, the CIA will go on being a prime contributor to national security. The nation can be glad that a man as able as John McCone has been chosen to give the agency leadership.